



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

one examines this index or turns the pages of these appendices or goes carefully through the leading chapters with their multiplicity of detail, one cannot but acknowledge that Dr. Weeks is a scholar capable of both exhaustive and enthusiastic work. He has laid both a whole religious denomination and a section under obligations to him, and he has done a considerable service to his fellow-historians. I am sure that he will get much of the gratitude he deserves ; but, after all, the approbation of his own student's conscience at the faithful and successful completion of his important task will be, as it ought always to be, his best reward.

W. P. TRENT.

Biography of James G. Blaine. By GAIL HAMILTON [ABIGAIL DODGE]. (Norwich, Conn. : The Henry Bill Publishing Company. 1895. Pp. iv, 722.)

A REVIEW of Miss Dodge's biography is a task for some public man associated with Mr. Blaine, acquainted with the currents of public life during the last thirty years, able from his own recollections to supplement and to correct the statements of the book. For this is not in reality a biography at all : it is the history of a family, written by a kinswoman who was practically an inmate of the household ; it is a volume of letters, few of which bear upon public affairs, or even on the public life of James G. Blaine, set in a framework of the rhetorical and antithetical statement in which the author was so skilful. More than half the thick volume is given up to details about others than Mr. Blaine himself, with many accounts of children's sayings and neighbors' gossip ; it does not invite the criticism of a serious biography.

Considering the eminence of Mr. Blaine and his influence on the national government, it is unfortunate that the plan of the book should be so unscientific, and its contribution to our knowledge of the man so scanty. No authorities are anywhere mentioned or cited. The chronology is so defective that it is not till twenty years after his marriage that we hear in the book of his having a wife ; the letters are printed in a haphazard manner, so that writer and recipient are not to be distinguished, or are hidden under initials. There is neither an index nor a list of papers ; and one feels timid about accepting any historical statement from the author, after learning (p. 64) that Gallatin was Washington's Secretary of the Treasury. It was not in the mind of the author, whose shrewd and incisive pen is now forever motionless, to use critical tints ; the book is all in black and white ; so far as we learn from it, Mr. Blaine appears to have had no other fault than that of interrupting other senators.

Yet indirectly and unconsciously the book brings the reader into appreciative relations with its subject ; and by its very omissions and laudations throws some light upon a career which did not fulfil its own promise. In the first place it brings out the oft-forgotten fact that Blaine came of well-to-do, distinguished, and educated ancestry. His father was a Princeton

man; his grandfather had travelled abroad; his great-grandfather had an honorable part in the Revolution; the Ewings were of his kindred, and wisely refused him a government clerkship. Young Blaine lived in western Pennsylvania, one of the most wide-awake parts of the country; and he had a good education for the times. He was born with interest in public affairs. At seventeen years we find him writing to a friend (p. 88): "Taylor stock has been rising very rapidly in the market since the old general returned to the United States . . . and such is the wild enthusiasm of the American people for a military hero that he will run ahead of anything that either party can bring out." His transfer at twenty-four to Maine made him a New Englander, and at once brought him into politics. By heredity, training, and natural interest, Blaine was prepared for public life.

It is with the private life of the Blaine family, however, that the book is chiefly concerned. Mr. Blaine enjoyed his family, loved his children, participated in their education, and was overwhelmed by the loss of three of them near the end of his own life. He was fond of foreign travel. He had extraordinary power of work—could think out his problems in the liveliest company, minded no interruption, and had a Napoleonic power of going to sleep at will. On the question of his fortune and its sources, a question which was never clearly answered during his life, the book gives no information; though there are a few hints of large investments in coal lands and other places (pp. 247, 255).

But in all these respects Blaine differed little from a hundred of his compeers. It is his public life which entitles him to a biography; and upon his public life we get here only the statements of an ardent admirer, and allusions which must be pieced together and eked out from other sources. It was as Speaker from 1869 to 1875 that Mr. Blaine first became famous. Nothing can be more manly than his own statement about his candidacy (p. 216): "I mean to win if I can fairly and honorably. If I cannot, there's the end. But if successful, I shall not have the self-reproach of having done one unworthy act to secure the place; and if unsuccessful, the same consciousness will be my compensating and consoling fact." There are also some interesting passages on the difficulty of making up committees (pp. 228, 260). But we must turn to Follett's *Speaker of the House of Representatives* to learn the real force and success of his speakership, and the fatal impression which it made upon men who had his destiny in their hands.

For in these six years Mr. Blaine made the reputation which he held during the rest of his life. How much injustice may have been done him the book does not record; for to the author all charges were malignant, and every investigation ended in a final triumph for the Speaker. Perhaps after twenty years it is possible to emerge from the marshes of personality and to form some judgment as to Mr. Blaine's standards and responsibility. It was a period of corruption, the old frauds of war-time supplemented by the confusion of frantic railroad-building. It was a period when, as now,

public men regularly and openly used their offices to build up their own political advancement. As Miss Dodge says (p. 293), Mr. Blaine "never made a point of small things. No such honesty as dividing his official from his personal correspondence ever complicated his use of the frank." Not to make a point of small things is no evidence of evil; but it tallies with a widespread belief that Mr. Blaine went further, and sought to use his public station to aid his private fortunes. Even if it were so, it would have been hard to fix public reprobation upon him, but for his great tactical blunder in seizing the Mulligan letters. The biography throws absolutely no new light upon that transaction, but leaves it evident that he feared to have those letters brought before a committee of investigation. The letters themselves were insufficient as evidence; Mr. Blaine's course alone gave them a barbed point, for it seemed to negative his claim that he had nothing to conceal. Thenceforth, though thousands of his party-friends persistently believed in him, there was a fraction which looked upon him as a man of low standards, and eventually they prevented him from reaching his great ambition, — the presidency.

The biography reviews, with little that is new, the campaigns of 1876, 1880, 1884, 1888, and 1892, in all of which Mr. Blaine was a great figure. Here may be found the record of the phrase of Robert G. Ingersoll's, which passed into a kind of proverb: "Like an armed warrior, like a plumed knight, James G. Blaine marched down the halls of the American Congress and threw his shining lance full and fair against the brazen forehead of every traitor to his country and every maligner of his fair reputation." On the whole, the man rises in one's estimation from quadrennium to quadrennium. A born fighter, he made relentless enemies; but who could spare from our political annals that characterization of Conkling which cost him the nomination of 1876 (p. 174): "The contempt of that large-minded gentleman is so wilting, his haughty disdain, his grandiloquent swell, his majestic, supereminent, overpowering turkey-gobbler strut has been so crushing to myself and all the members of this House that I know it was an act of the greatest temerity for me to venture upon a controversy with him." In 1880 he threw his influence for the largest-minded and most statesmanlike of his rivals. In 1884 his canvass was brilliant and for the most part dignified. In 1888 he had the courage and ability to repel all attempts to nominate him. It must be admitted, and the biography does not disprove the statement, that Mr. Blaine deprived himself of the presidency by raising up opposition which he need not have raised, by an obtuseness as to what the public might consider unbecoming. But he bore his defeats far better than such a greater man as Webster.

Yet, without the presidency, Mr. Blaine had one opportunity to make a great reputation as a statesman, — his service as Secretary of State in 1881. On this period, and this alone, does Miss Dodge's biography render a substantial service to American history. In pages 490 to 503 appears a most intimate and confidential correspondence between President-elect Garfield and his future Secretary of State. We see Mr. Blaine insisting, almost as a

condition of his acceptance, that the President shall take Mrs. Garfield's advice ; we find counsel — almost peremptory — as to cabinet officials ; we see a keen analysis of the sections of the Republican party, including "the Reformers by profession . . . noisy but not numerous, pharisaical but not practical, ambitious but not wise, pretentious but not powerful. They can be easily dealt with, and can be hitched to your administration with ease " (p. 491). We see plans laid for placating or securing the Grant men. It is the work of a political mechanician of genius.

Here we have the key of the aggressive policy of Garfield's short administration : the Republican party was to be consolidated within, and the country aroused by a vigorous foreign attitude. Nothing better illustrates the essential weakness in Mr. Blaine's character ; he could manage parties, he could inspire a president, but he could not gauge the nation's love for peace and quiet. His Pan-American idea was magnificent, but it was inconvenient. President Arthur abandoned it, and when, in 1889, Mr. Blaine again became Secretary of State he himself seemed disillusionized, and appeared as a conservative and restraining force. Had he enjoyed the dozen years of public life which a man of his age might fairly have expected, he might have become again a great force in the nation.

Mr. Blaine has often been compared with Henry Clay, but this biography shows how small was the likeness between them. Both were energetic, magnetic leaders, speakers of the House, secretaries of state, repeatedly disappointed candidates for the presidency. But Clay was a great figure, and filled a great place ; while of Blaine the best-intentioned biographer makes out a man genial, kindly, eager, shrewd, renowned, but not extraordinary. His notions on finance and government were good, he stood out often against illiberal associates, but he never aroused his fellow-men to magnificent thoughts or deeds, or compelled them to turn back from destruction. Henry Clay would have been great if he never had held office. James G. Blaine was eminent because he could secure elections. Who would choose to spend a day in Augusta in 1884, rather than a day at Ashland in 1840?

ALBERT BUSHNELL HART.

History of the Jewish Nation after the Destruction of Jerusalem under Titus, by the Rev. Alfred Edersheim, M.A., D.D., Ph.D. Revised by the Rev. Henry A. White, M.A. With a Preface by the Rev. William Sanday, D.D., LL.D. (London and New York : Longmans, Green and Co., 1896, pp. xiv, 553.)

A peculiar interest attaches to the work of Dr. Edersheim because he was so well versed in both Jewish and Christian literature. It is in part for this reason that a third edition of the book under notice seemed called for, though the first edition appeared in 1856. It is, however, much more than a new edition that Dr. White has given us. It is the result of a comparison of the first edition, not only with Dr. Edersheim's modifications of thought found in his later works, but also with the later literature in the